

**New Shoreham Town Council Meeting
Second Budget Public Hearing
Town Hall, Old Town Road
March 24, 2010
7:00 p.m.**

Present: First Warden Kimberley H. Gaffett, Second Warden Raymond J. Torrey, Town Councilors Peter B. Baute, Kenneth C. Lacoste and Richard P. Martin. Also present were Town Manager Nancy O. Dodge and Finance Director Amy Land. Town Clerk Fiona Fitzpatrick was present to take the minutes of the meeting. Approximately 30 members of the public attended.

First Warden Gaffett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She explained it was the second in a series of budget work sessions.

Town Manager Dodge reported she met with representatives from the employees' association. This is the last year of the employees contract, negotiations have begun. The current budget reflects 3% across the board increases.

The Road Superintendent and Recreation Director will come to the next budget hearing to address questions about their departments.

The budget does not include \$65,000 for debt service on the purchase of Plat 6, Lot 147. The purchase was authorized by the voters but has been delayed while the sellers clear the title. The budget includes \$90,600 for state revenue in lieu of motor vehicle taxes. The Governor's budget eliminated that funding to the Towns, but only the legislature may block the payment. The legislature has not yet acted on the Governor's request.

Speaking from the audience, Jim Hinthorn urged the Council to question long held assumptions, including the practice of paying for employees' health insurance. Others spoke against his suggestion. Also speaking from the audience, Socha Cohen suggested increasing the landing fee, the mooring permits, and mooring rental fees because they do not impact residents.

Finance Director Amy Land reviewed the budget.

Other Town Fees & Income: Harbors Rental Moorings were adjusted from \$310,000 to \$320,000. Private rental moorings were adjusted from \$16,000 to \$19,500.

Administration: Consultant Litigation will be under budget this year. The line was not adjusted from \$75,000 because litigation is expected in FY 11 for Champlins and PU Zoning, and because litigation expenses cannot always be anticipated.

Finance: A fiscal clerk is leaving, the position will be filled at 30 hours instead of 35 hours for a savings of \$4,200. The position covers all accounts payable and some receivables. In a discussion of whether to rehire the position, the Finance Director pointed out it provides a division of duties within the department required for internal controls.

Fire/Rescue/Communications: Building Maintenance was reduced from \$2,000 to \$1,000.

Police: Adjustments within department lines resulted in an aggregate increase of \$5,000. Wages Officers was adjusted from \$167,882 to \$168,990. Conservation Officer/Beach Patrol was adjusted from \$4,000 to \$3,000. Benefits was adjusted from \$142,007 to \$151,151. Payroll Taxes was adjusted from \$31,748 to \$31,845. Housing was adjusted from \$10,000 to \$10,500. Travel was adjusted from \$11,000 to \$8,000. Equipment Maintenance was adjusted from \$2,500 to \$1,000.

Town Highways: The Electricity line was adjusted from \$27,000 to \$25,000. The department will be reviewed in greater depth at the next budget session.

State Roads: There are four positions in the department, three are filled. The department will be reviewed in greater depth at the next budget session.

Harbors: A Harbormaster has not yet been hired. The wages line of \$50,883 is considered a 'placeholder' and it is anticipated a new hire will receive less. The Sewer expenditure was reduced from \$23,000 to \$20,000.

Recreation: Summer Camp wages were increased from \$10,580 to \$13,022. Payroll Taxes were increased from \$3,382 to \$9,606. Fred Benson Beach was reduced from \$25,300 to \$24,100. Heinz Field Maintenance was increased from \$8,850 to \$20,600. The department will be reviewed in greater depth at the next budget session.

Library: An animated discussion ensued regarding whether to fill a vacant half-time aide position in the library. The position is eligible for single benefits and is budgeted at \$25,000 (wages, taxes, benefits). The Library Director said hours of operation would be curtailed without the position. The Finance Director was directed to return with funding for different scenarios including a 15 hour per week position without benefits. Ms. Gaffett said eliminating a vacant position is preferable to eliminating a filled position. Dr. Baute encouraged the Library to think of creative ways to raise funds, such as subscriptions for nonresidents. Board members explained that they engage in aggressive year round fundraising (they raised \$100,000 over two years for repairs for the HVAC system, which will save approximately \$10,000 per year in electric costs). Board member Connie LaRue, circulation clerk Kristin Baumann and others spoke about the excellence of the Library and its importance to the community. The discussion will be continued at the next budget hearing.

Boards/Commissions: North Light costs and revenues have increased to 2008 levels because the interpretive center at the Lighthouse will be open to the public.

Community Projects/Support: Support for the Medical Center was defended by Administrative Director Monty Stover. Dr. Baute spoke for increasing support for the Fire Department and the Early Learning Center. Mr. Lacoste spoke for increasing support for the Early Learning Center. There was a discussion of renting the Chief's House at the Coast Guard Station. A substantial capital outlay may be required to modernize features of the house.

School Support: The line remains at \$100,000 less than the School's request.

Capital/Tax: \$101,113 has been budgeted for five capital projects. The Town Manager explained the first to be eliminated would be the roof of the Chief's House. The Finance Director will ascertain whether any cost can be cut from the \$35,000 allocated for the repair. The Highway Department's flair mower is their most used piece of equipment. 'Police Vehicle' is a lease to which the Town is committed. Town Manager Nancy Dodge reported the Fire Department asked for \$30,000 to replace the roof on the fire barn after the budget process wrapped up. The Manager met with the Fire Station Trustees, the building may require more extensive repairs. The Chief will be getting a repair estimate. A grant application was submitted. The roof repairs will be done in the current budget, long term work will be added to the capital budget.

Dr. Baute asked what would happen to the budget if non-contract employees accepted the same salary in FY 2010 as in 2011. The Finance Director reported a savings in excess of \$7,000. There was a discussion of reducing Town Council salaries.

At 9:15, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Torrey and seconded by Mr. Martin.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Minutes approved April 5, 2010

Fiona Fitzpatrick
Town Clerk